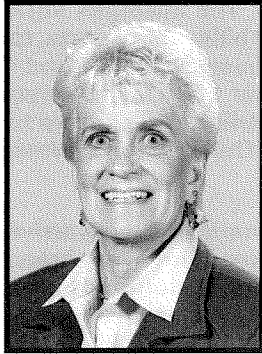


Hammerstrom's

for the people
in the 17th Senate District

Hotline



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NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE MONTH In 1983, President Ronald Reagan named November as National Alzheimer's Disease Month in an effort to increase public awareness and federal research funding to find treatments and a possible cure for the disease. For nearly 25 years, the Alzheimer's Association has helped to carry out President Reagan's vision by educating the public on Alzheimer's disease and its effects. The Association set up a 24-hour Nationwide Contact Center Helpline, a confidential service staffed by master's-level clinicians who provide callers with information about understanding dementia, Alzheimer's diagnosis, treatment options, information for caregivers, and crisis assistance. Through the Helpline, you can also be connected to local Association chapters which are the premier local resource for help with memory loss. You can call the toll-free Helpline for assistance seven days a week, at 1-800-272-3900. For more information about National Alzheimer's Disease Month or the Alzheimer's Association, please visit www.alz.org.

DID YOU KNOW? According to the Alzheimer's Association, the number of people with Alzheimer's has increased from 2 million to 4.5 million since the first National Alzheimer's Disease Month in 1983.

MICHIGAN'S SENIORS AND LOW-INCOME CITIZENS CAN GET HELP WITH HEATING BILLS Much has been in the news about the increase in natural gas prices across the nation. The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) encourages senior and low-income citizens who are struggling to pay their heat bills to take advantage of various home heating help programs available. Programs such as the Budget Billing Plan and the Medical Emergency Protection Plan are available through most local gas or electric companies. The State of Michigan also offers assistance to eligible residents through a home heating credit or the State Emergency Relief Fund. Customers who are unable to pay their bills should contact their utility company or energy supplier first and explain their situation before receiving a shut-off notice. For more information about these and other assistance programs, please contact the MPSC, toll-free, at 1-800-292-9555, or visit the Commission's website at www.michigan.gov/mpsc.

BILLS TO PROTECT ESSENTIAL VETERANS PROGRAMS PASS SENATE The Michigan Senate recently approved legislation to protect two programs designed to assist veterans and their children. The Veterans Tuition Grant Program provides college tuition assistance for the children of deceased or disabled veterans. The Michigan Veterans Trust Fund serves as an emergency reserve fund for veterans in need of assistance with medical bills, utility costs, taxes, and food. Both programs are facing financial difficulties and the threat of discontinuation. House Bills 4001 and 4002 would shift responsibility for the tuition program from the Trust Fund to the Michigan Higher Education Assistance Authority. HB 5091 creates an income tax checkoff that would allow Michigan taxpayers to contribute \$2 or more to the Michigan Higher Education Assistance Authority for the Children of Veterans Tuition Program. The Children of Veterans Tuition Program checkoff could generate an estimated \$500,000 to \$1 million annually.

MICHIGAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM FEATURES MILITARY EXHIBIT In 1796, the first American troops arrived in Michigan to raise the Stars and Stripes over Fort Lernoult at Detroit. Ever since, men and women from every branch of military service have worked, trained, and recruited here in the Great Lakes State. The Michigan Historical Museum is paying tribute to daily life at Michigan military posts, highlighting the way military life has changed throughout the years and the things that amazingly have stayed the same. Visitors can experience a day in the life of a soldier living at Michigan's forts and posts through artifacts, graphics, and hands-on experiences. The exhibit, which opened November 6, 2005 and runs through June 11, 2006, features information about the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard. For more information about *A Soldier's Life*, please contact the Historical Museum at (517) 373-3559.

If you would like to receive future issues of Hammerstrom's Hotline via e-mail,
please contact me at SenBHammerstrom@senate.michigan.gov